

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4346

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UNCLAS ROME 5312

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, YO, IT

SUBJECT: ITALIAN PRESS COVERAGE OF MARSHALL TITO'S APRIL 15

STATEMENT ON ZONE B

1. BEGIN SUMMARY. ITALIAN PRESS REPORTED TITO'S APRIL 15 STATEMENT ON ZONE B FACTUALLY, QUOTING EXTRACTS AT LENGTH AND GENERALLY WITHOUT COMMENT. RIGHT-WING PRESS ALONE DEVOTED SPACE TO POLEMICS AND GAVE INTERPRETATION. END SUMMARY.

2. EXCERPTS FROM MARSHALL TITO'S SARAJEVO REMARKS PRINTED IN ALL MAJOR DAILIES TODAY (APRIL 16). PASSAGES QUOTED MADE FOLLOWING POINTS: ZONE B IS PART OF YUGOSLAVIA; WESTERN RUMORS OF INTENDED SOVIET AGGRESSION AGAINST YUGOSLAVIA UNFOUNDED; YUGOSLAVIA REMAINS ABSOLUTELY UNITED IN FACE OF ANY OUTSIDE PRESSURE.

3. COMMUNIST "L'UNITA" ALSO QUOTED TITO AS ASYING "IT IS NOT BY CHANCE THAT THE AMERICANS HAVE CHOSEN TERRITORY ALONG OUR BORDERS FOR THEIR MILITARY EXERCISES", IN A FURTHER REFERENCE TO OUTSIDE PRESSURE ON YUGOSLAVIAN TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY.

4. "PAESE SERA", COMMUNIST-LEANING DAILY, REPORTED TITO'S UNCLASSIFIED

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REMARKS, THEN NOTED THAT ITALIAN TOURISM HAS RISEN IN YUGOSLAVIA

AND THIS YEAR'S SLOGAN IS "ITALIANI BENVENUTI IN YUGOSLAVIA" (ITALIANS, WELCOME TO YUGOSLAVIA).

5. CONSERVATIVE "IL TEMPO" CARRIES FRONT PAGE REPORT UNDER HEADLINE "TITO HARD AND AGGRESSIVE." ACCOMPANYING EDITORIAL DAMNED BOTH YUGOSLAVIAN "FASCIST-NATIONALISM" AND GOI "STUPID AND FATUOUS" FOREIGN POLICY.

6. UNDER HEADLINE "MENACING PROVOCATIONS BY TITO", NEO-FASCIST DAILY "IL SECOLO" MADE TITO'S REMARKS LEAD STORY, CALLING THEM "A CHALLENGE THAT CANNOT STAND WITHOUT RESPONSE." LONG ARTICLE REAFFIRMED THESIS THAT ZONE B ITALIAN TERRITORY UNDER "TEMPORARY YUGOSLAV ADMINISTRATION" AND CONTENDED THAT "SOVIET PAWNS" IN YUGOSLAVIA ATTEMPTING TO DIVERT ATTENTION FROM REAL THREAT OF SOVIET INVASION OF YUGOSLAVIA "AFTER TITO." "IL SECOLO" CLAIMS THIS THREAT DOCUMENTED BY MASSING OF TROOPS ON BORDERS BETWEEN HUNGARY, BULGARIA AND YUGOSLAVIA AND BY BULGARIAN TERRITORIAL CLAIMS ON MACEDONIA. SECOND ARTICLE ENTITLED "WHO WILL SAVE YUGOSLAVIA" BY FRANCESCO CARALLETTO ACCEPTS ABOVE THESIS AND REMINDS YUGOSLAVS THAT IN 1948 SIMILAR THREAT OF INVASION BY SOVIETS NECESSITATED A TURN TO THE WEST. ARTICLE CALLS FOR RENEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT OF ZONE B INCLUDING PARTICIPATION OF ALL SIGNERS OF LONDON MEMORANDUM.

7. COMMENT: WITH EXCEPTION OF "IL TEMPO" AND "IL SECOLO", ITALIAN PRESS REACTION TO TITO'S STATEMENT RESTRAINED AND FREE OF POLEMIC OR EVEN INTERPRETATION. VOLPE

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